



Clean Energy Future Committee Meeting Minutes

September 23, 2022
8:15 – 9:30 a.m.
Virtually Conducted

Members present: Marc Breslow, Shelly Dein, Coralie Cooper (as chair), Pasi Miettinen, Jim Feeney (for Town Manager), Jim DiTullio, Dan Amstutz, Talia Fox.

Also attending: Susan Keane, Charlotte Milan, Luksnaree Maneechot

Members not present: Eric Helmuth, Ryan Katofsky, David Morgan, Nellie Aikenhead

Ms. Cooper convened the meeting at 8:15 am. Ms. Cooper read a brief statement noting the legislation that permits virtual meetings.

1. Review and Approve Meeting Minutes

The Committee reviewed the minutes from the July 22, 2022 meeting. Ms. Cooper asked for any corrections, additions, or changes to the draft minutes. Mr. Amstutz sent minor text edits. With those changes, Mr. Breslow motioned to approve, and Shelly Dein seconded. The Committee then approved the July 22th meeting minutes.

2. Committee/Staffing Update:

Ms. Cooper thanked Dave Levy for his many contributions to the CEFC over the years. Mr. Miettinen also thanked Dave for all the work that he contributed to the CEFC over the past several years. Ms. Dein asked what the mechanism is to replace people on the CEFC. Ms. Fox answered that the position would be posted and since Mr. Levy was a town meeting member, he will need to be replaced by a town meeting member. Ms. Fox will double check on the process. Sandy is a member of the CEFC and he has designed Jim Feeney to be his proxy in CEFC meetings. Mr. Feeney suggested engaging the town moderator on this question.

There is a new Director of Planning and Community Development. Her name is Claire Ricker and she worked previously in Lowell. She has a lot of great expertise that she brings to the Department.

3. ACE Contract:

Ms. Fox shared slides on the new ACE contract, which starts with the November meter read. She covered the pricing structure of the new contract. Community

aggregation allows the Town to purchase energy from a competitive supplier to secure higher renewable energy at a fixed price. We have a new 2-year contract that goes to November 2024. NextEra is the new supplier. We have 30% additional Class I renewable energy on top of the State requirements. We also have 50% and 100% additional renewable energy products as well as a basic option that contains the same percentage of renewables that the State requires.

The new pricing will increase rates. The new rate for the local green is 17.2 cents/kwh which is less than Eversource basic through the end of 2022. Ms. Dein asked why the 100% option is actually 120%. Ms. Fox explained that the Select Board thought we should offer a 100% option. After the meeting with the Select Board, our consultant showed us a DPU ruling which said if we re-defined the products, residents would be removed from ACE and be put on Eversource basic. Ms. Dein asked about messaging and Ms. Fox replied that any purchase of Class I supports additional renewable energy development. People can also choose the 50% option which is close to 100% total renewable energy (as the State defines renewable). Mr. Breslow asked if Ms. Fox could send out the chart. All participants will receive renewal notifications next week. Mr. DiTullio asked who people could talk to if they have questions. Ms. Fox said there is a press release going out next week and the Town Manager will talk about this in his ACMI update. Mr. DiTullio suggested the recycling center might be a place to post information about ACE. Ms. Dein suggested making a presentation at the Senior Center or the Council on Aging on ACE.

Ms. Cooper asked what the price of gas will be this winter. Ms. Fox said there will be an increase in natural gas prices – a pretty substantial increase. Mr. Miettinen said the gas increase is supposed to be 30%. There is an Eversource discount for electric heat – it's called "A-4 residential space heating rate."

4. 10-Municipality Pilot

Mr. Fox clarified where the Town is in the process of applying to pilot and eligibility for the pilot. The eligibility for the pilot program requires that a community meet one of following thresholds around inclusionary housing:

- 10% affordable housing;
- Approved housing plan; or
- Multifamily zoning district of reasonable size by right.

The Town did have safe harbor under option 2, but this has expired as of mid-September. The Town intends to pursue option 3. We have to be eligible by February 2024. This path also corresponds to what is required under MBTA communities, which the Town is pursuing. The Town is working on a plan for this and either Kelly or Claire will come and speak about this. Multifamily zoning is three or more families. Multifamily is also defined as 15 units per acre.

The MBTA communities is a state-wide program that requires communities that have transit. Communities need to meet requirements around housing to receive funding for transit. Mr. Amstutz said that it is a new law passed by the State legislature last

year. If towns don't become compliant at a certain time, towns aren't eligible for funds.

5. Workgroup Updates

Electrify Arlington – Ms. Cooper showed a couple of photos from Town Day, including the booth and a photo of the interactive map, where residents put different color pins for the different types of electrification technologies. Ms. Cooper thanked the CEFC members who helped. She recapped some of the many questions that residents asked of the booth volunteers. We have 5 coaches identified and training with Abode began this week and soon residents will be able to request a coaching session. There is a resilient grid event, EA display at the library, and we are planning a kick-off event for November 2nd. Mr. Miettinen thanked the group for a good job.

Municipal fleet plan – we are working on a fleet inventory and also language to update the existing municipal fleet plan that is nearly 20 years old. Ms. Fox asked for assistance from the CEFC before the plan goes to the Select Board.

Buildings by-law – the by-law would supplement the code updates taking place at the state level. Determining how much discretion the permanent building committee will have. The Town has a 6-school building study that is ongoing, looking at the electrification of HVAC systems at each building. The cost estimate portion is completed. The consultant is on phase 3 of 4 phases. Next steps include presentations to the school committee, Select Board, and other groups, including possibly the CEFC. Ms. Dein asked what the technologies are that the study is considering. Ms. Fox shared that the two technologies being considered are ground-source heat pumps and variable refrigerant flow and that the study also considers efficiency measures. Mr. Miettinen mentioned the DOE cold climate heat pump challenge that will require cold climate heat pumps be on the market by 2024. It will be difficult for a ground-source to compete. There may be lower cost options coming in a couple years. Consultants should be aware of this. Ms. Fox acknowledged that the IRA options will be applied too – for direct pay for clean energy systems like ground-source.

Historic districts – Ms. Fox shared that when the working group met to discuss this in July, the idea was to bring the Historical Commission (as well as the Historic Districts Commission) into the discussion. Ms. Fox is still looking into who the best representative is for that group.

6. Other items

Heat pump hot water heater

Coralie raised the availability of heat pump hot water heater that plugs into a regular 110-volt outlet, which represents a technical advance. Folks who buy these would not need the additional wiring. These are only for sale in California currently because the heater needs 1,000 square feet of indoor space. If they're in a closet, they're vented to the outdoors. The manufacturer says they cannot be vented to the outside in places where it gets down to 37 degrees. Ms. Dein clarified that the concern is inadvertently freezing water pipes in basements because you're taking heat out of the air. Ms. Dein asked why this 110-volt version would be different than any other

version. As in, the issue is true whether you have a 220-volt or a 110-volt plug, and that may not be the only issue this technology is only offered in California. Ms. Dein is looking into solar-assisted hot water heat pumps that do heat exchange outside rather than inside, to avoid basement cooling issue. This solves the potential pipe freezing issue but not the electrical service issue. Ms. Dein will share resources on how the technology works.

R-4 electricity rate

Mr. DiTullio requested that Mr. Miettinen sent around the information about the A-4 residential space heating rate. Ms. Dein clarified that this is not for heat pumps, but simply for primarily heating with electricity. Even if you have fossil fuel backup, you can apply this rate, only to the distribution costs.

Southeast Asian Leadership Fellowship Program

Charlotte Milan introduced Luksnaree Maneechot, who goes by Fern, who is a visiting fellow through the State Department's Young Southeast Asian Leadership Fellowship Program. She is a professional in energy and greenhouse gas accounting and is researching lifecycle emissions from waste. Ms. Maneechot shared her background as a Senior Climate Change Expert and work on greenhouse gas accounting in her home country of Thailand. She thanked the CEFC for the opportunity to participate in the meeting and learn from the group.

Ms. Dein made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Miettinen seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:24am.

Submitted by Coralie Cooper.